Correspondence.

Constitutional Health of Plants.

To the Editor of Garden and Forest:

Sir,—Observing the growths of the various plants we notice that some of them are unthrifty, and when closely inspected we find them infested by microscopic parasites. Other plants we see preyed upon by insects, which, like the fungi, eat the substance of the plant without destroying it. Some of these, growing under apparently similar conditions, but free from fungus or insect, and apparently healthy in the midst of pestilential influences.

Fungi and insects evidently choose their food, and where there is a choice of adaptable foods they often show a decided preference. The potato-beetle feeds upon the Egyplant, the Tomato-plant and the Potato-plant, but, where both are equally accessible, the Potato-plant will be chosen the first. The rose-bug feeds upon all sorts of Grape-vines, but it prefers those containing the blood of Vitis riparia, and where it finds such food, the rest of the vine will be devoured. I have seen vines growing in a vineyard, the leaves of one vine being entirely eaten, the rest of that vine being left untouched. Hence viticulturists advise the interspersing of a few Riparia-vines in the vineyard to attract this insect from other vines.

In hot, arid climates the plants refuse to grow when there is no moisture or when there is, but no water can be obtained. In others, fungi and insects flourish, and no plant can be grown with success.

A. W. Pearson.

Vineland, N. J.

The Tan Bark Oak.

To the Editor of Garden and Forest:

Sir.—Among Californian Oaks, and there are many, none are more beautiful than Quercus dentata. It is an evergreen, with a strong, spreading habit, that makes it a favorite for the Oak and Chestnut. The leaves, elliptical in outline, light green above and fuzzy beneath, are shed in summer. In July it blossoms, and the very solid odor of the flowers is the one feature of this tree that makes it a favorite for planting. It is very hardy in the West, and when grown in a cold climate, it is one of the few trees that will grow in the northern states. It is often used in the East, and is planted in a number of places.

It is in the Redwood region that it attains its greatest perfection, and it is the one tree that is planted along the railroad tracks. The leaves are in very long, narrow, thin, and light green, and they are covered with a coarse, rough, flaky bark. The branches are long, and they are covered with a thick, rough, flaky bark. The trunk is generally one of the most ornamental of all the oaks, and it is often used in ornamental purposes.

The Tan Bark Oak is a great spreading tree, frequently three feet in diameter and fifty in height. The dense shade of the Redwood forest forces every tree to grow up for light and air, and in such situations this Oak grows as a fine, almost bare of branches. The branches are long, and they are covered with a thick, rough, flaky bark. The trunk is generally one of the most ornamental of all the oaks, and it is often used in ornamental purposes.

The workers, with their families, move into the woods for the summer. A Redwood is cut, and the lumber is split out. The borders are cut close to the ground, and the lumber is split out. The wood is then peeled and thrown down to dry. When dry it rolls. The hillsides are very steep, and to get this bark to the woods, roads are cut. In some places where wood roads are cut, the lumber is split out and used in the lumber yards. It is then peeled and thrown down to dry.

Nothing but the bark is used, and after the peeler has gone through a maze of trunk and branch, covers the ground, and is used for fuel in some places for making firewood.
used. When a fire sweeps through this mass of dry material it burns with a heat that kills small standing trees. In peeling
the methods are wasteful, and every few years the tree may appear
that some large portion of the earth is girdled by taking a four-foot section of bark from the base. The Tan Bark Oak is tenacious of life, and
sprouts vigorously, but the odds are against it, and it seems as
if in a few years this enormous observatory of value, cut into a
garden lawn, would be immense, will be destroyed to
secure a few lengths of bark from each tree.
U.S. K. Cal.

Carl Purdy

Help Against the Gypsy Moth.

To the Editor of Garden and Forest:

Sir,—In view of the success which has apparently crowned the
efforts of the Orange culturist of California in “fighting
fire with fire,” or rather insect with insect, and, calling to mind
the warfare which is being waged in the vicinity of Boston with
the Gypsy Moth, I was struck with a passage I was reading
today in a little book entitled The Branch Builders, by the
late Rev. J. G. Wood, which, if my memory is not at fault, is
a reprint of a portion of his better-known work, Homes without
Hams, and which may perhaps suggest a new method of
meeting the invader.

In treating of the habits of an English species akin to our
own caterpillar, he speaks of a curious habit of the larvae of
which are often found in the nests of this pest, and which feeds
viciously on the caterpillar. The scientific name of this
beetle he gives as Calosoma scyphonata.

The following extract will show its connection with the case in
hand:

“Knowing the habits of this grub, a French entomologist,
Monsieur Boissonard, managed very ingeniously to avail him-
self of the destructive capacities of these larvae in a
peculiar way, by the use of a well-known insect, the Gypsy Moth,
which is very common in France. The larvae of this moth are
destructive to trees, feeding on their leaves, and then retreating to a hiding-place in some service of
fire bark. Finding his trees infested with these caterpillars,
Monsieur Boissonard procured a number of female Calo-
somata, and placed them on the trees. They laid their
eggs, and in due season the larvae were hatched. In process of
time the destructive grubs increased so much that they ate all
the nutritious caterpillar, and at the end of the third year the
trees were cleared, and the Calosoma beetles had to go else-
where for a living.”

“In England the Calosoma is very rare,” but “in the south of
France it is plentiful enough, as is needed from the enorm-
umous multitudes of crop-destroying caterpillars on which it feeds.”

This plan may already have been tried or investigated, but if
not, it seems to me worthy of consideration, though I am
aware that the introduction of foreign species of animals is not to be lightly undertaken; witness, the English sparrow and the rabbits of Australia.

Frank H. Nutter.

Minneapolis, Minn.

[There is no doubt that certain ground-beetle larvae feed upon

hairy caterpillars, and the observation mentioned is correct. Professor Riley writes that he has for some

years been urging the Gypsy Moth Commission to send an agent abroad to collect the European enemies of that insect, and it is to be hoped that this will soon be done.—Ed.]

Exhibitions.

Orchids at Short Hills, New Jersey.

The exhibition at the United States Nurseries, to which
Messrs. Pitcher & Manda invited the public last week, sur-
passed all expectation of material and effectiveness of arrange-
ment any of the previous efforts of the firm. The main display
was arranged in the great Palm-house, 250 feet long and high
enough to accommodate superb specimens of Tree Ferns and
Palms. The visitor entered the house through a vestibule
flanked by tall Laurels and Cytisus in bloom, with the clear
golden yellow of Doronicums on either side of the doorway.
Inside the door there seemed to stretch away to an intermin-
able distance a tropical forest, with its study vases hung
by the flowers of thousands of Orchids, not crowded together,
but naturally and effectively placed where their soft harmonies
and sweet perfumes made the most pleasing picture. On
either side of this long house, in the groves of great Ce-


Orchids at the Eden Musée.

For the sixth year in succession Messrs. Siebold & Wad-
ley have held an exhibition of Orchids and other tropical
plants at the Eden Musée, in this city. The chief interest of
the exhibition, as usual, centred in the Orchids, which were
shown in considerable variety, but first-rate specimens of
Palms, Cycads, Tree Ferns and other rare and valuable tropical
plants were also displayed. Many of these last were said to
have been lately brought from Trinidad, where there is a
branch of the Rose Hill Nurseries, in which tropical plants
are produced in large quantities. The plants were arranged
to suit the taste, especially the curiously greenery which
masquerade the front of the house, and to make the front of the
Orchids in Mesers., Siebold & Wadley’s collection was a new
form of Cattleya labiata which had a larger lip, a deeper color,
and a green back. Orchids that were scented among the greenery
there were good plants of Cattleya splendidissima, Catar-
dere and C. Aspasia, and many other choice forms of C.